



Article 5: New Center Building at 51 Main Street



Approval Timeline – November 8th Election Ballot

- ❖ The vote for 51 Main Street is on the November 8th town election ballot.
- ❖ A debt exclusion requires a 2/3 majority vote at a Town Meeting and a majority vote at an election.
- ❖ If the ballot question passes (majority approval), the Select Board has the option to call a Special Town Meeting within 90 days of the vote.



Project Planning Timeline

- ❖ Public discussion of project began in **2015** with planning for new Fire Headquarters
- ❖ Initial **\$60K** for Feasibility Study approved at **2017** Annual Town Meeting
- ❖ Study completed by Context in 2018 recommended two-story **9,100 s.f.** building that includes:
 - 100-seat Meeting Room / Police Training Room / Other Training / Meeting Needs
 - Office space for Technology Dept., Facilities Dept. and Veterans Services
- ❖ Additional **\$320K** appropriation was approved for design and testing of site at **2018** Annual Town Meeting





Project Planning Timeline (cont'd)

- ❖ Special Town Meetings in **October 2019** and **October 2020** appropriated **\$400K** to remove communications tower from existing Fire Station building and construct new tower adjacent to Police Station
- ❖ Center Building Project put on hold in **March 2020** due to COVID-19 pandemic. Select Board voted to restart project in **September 2021**
- ❖ **\$92K** of ARPA funds was approved in April 2022 to evaluate energy efficiency and sustainability options for the project. Town has now committed **\$872K** to date on this project.
- ❖ Project is expected to advertise for bids by early summer **2023**. Construction expected to be completed by early **2024**.
- ❖ Proposed project has been discussed at over **100** public meetings - (PTBC, SB, CEASC, FINCOM, SPR, ATM, STM, CPC, LWV)



New Communications Tower at Police Station



Key Needs and Project Components

- Proposed building addresses six (6) identified Town department/space needs for the community:
 - ✓ New Large Meeting/Community/Training Room
- Provide new office space for the following:
 - ✓ Technology Department
 - ✓ Veterans Services
 - ✓ Facilities Department
 - ✓ Sustainability Coordinator
 - ✓ Wellness Coordinator



Wellness Coordinator and Animal Control Officer currently share downstairs Conference Room at Town Hall



Town Hall Meeting Room

Current Issues:

- Historically used by many Town Departments and over 80 committees
- Primary Meeting Room for Select Board, Finance Committee, Planning Board, ZBA and Conservation Commission
- Consistently inadequate space for public attending in-person meetings
- Currently has available seating for approximately 20 attendees





New Meeting/Community/Training Room

Key Features:

- Multi-functional space with two (2) retractable partition walls
- Located on the 1st floor, accessible off Main Lobby and entrance off Main Street
- Ample seating for up to **100** for large crowds and joint board meetings
- Replaces Police Training Room that was taken for Combined Dispatch Center
- Can also be used for training purposes by other departments



Rendering of New Meeting/Community/Training Room



Technology Department

Current Issues:

- Located on East Prescott Street in former Fire Station Garage in Forge Village
- Does not meet accessibility requirements
- Inadequate parking, office and storage space, HVAC systems, and bathroom
- Servers located in unsafe area in garage bays
- Inadequate space for staff, staff meetings, and training programs

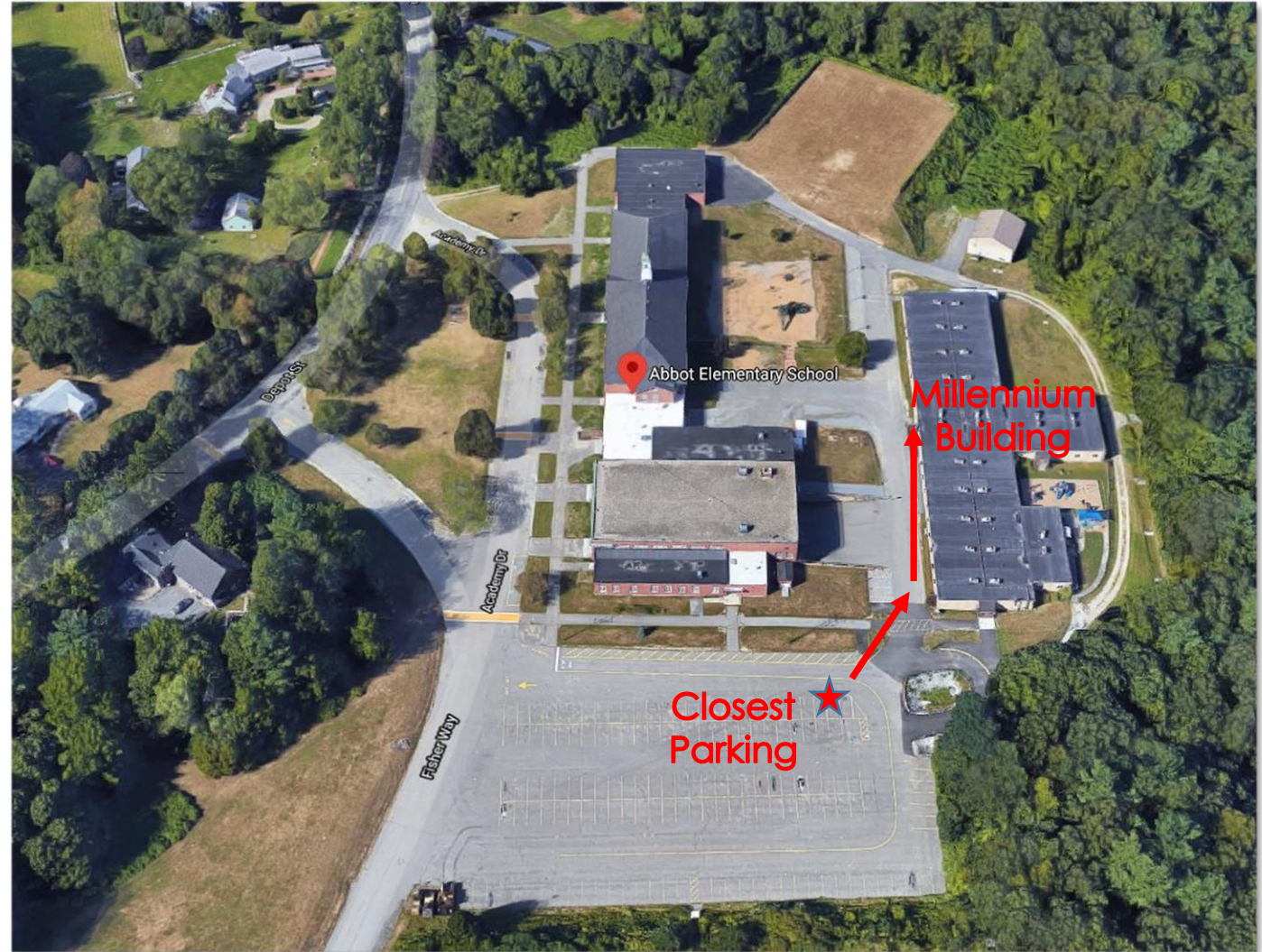




Veterans Services Office

Current Issues:

- Located in Millennium Building
- No other suitable location in town including Town Hall and Senior Center
- Visitors must walk over 100 yards from parking lot to office





Facilities Department

Current Issues:

- Located in Millennium Building
- Building has limited life expectancy
- Need permanent long-term location
- Current space not adequate
- Shared space with Veterans Services
- Need additional space for file and plan storage





Site Plan and Parking

- Impacts to courtyard and memorial will be minimal
- Improved connection to Police Station
- **135** existing and **142** proposed parking spaces at Town Hall Complex
- Additional **34** spaces proposed behind 63 Main Street would also be accessible
- Approximately **56** spaces dedicated to Police Dept.
- 2018 Parking Study determined there is adequate spacing **currently** in Town Center for events/meetings in building





Total Building Size: 9,500 s.f.





Energy Conservation and Sustainability Features

Building project goals include:

- ✓ Collaboration with Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee (CEASC)
- ✓ Project to align with Town's commitment to **Net Zero** emissions and sustainability
- ✓ High efficiency electric heating and cooling system through use of air source heat pump
- ✓ Building systems will maximize energy efficiency and will have provisions for solar PV
- ✓ Thermal envelope will have **R values** of **25** (walls) and **40** (roof) – exceeds code minimum
- ✓ Heating & cooling systems will have an Energy Use Intensity (**EUI**) approaching **25**
- ✓ Energy used will be offset by renewable energy – either produced on-site or purchased



Project Cost Summary

Construction Costs	
Construction Costs including demolition of existing building*	\$ 9,235,000
A&E Fees, OPM, Commissioning & Testing	\$ 1,200,000
Furnishings, Equipment and Relocation Costs	\$ 475,000
Project Contingency (10%)	\$ 1,100,000
Total Estimated Project Cost	\$ 12,010,000

<i>Estimated Annual Operation & Maintenance Cost</i>	<i>\$ 46,500</i>
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**Construction costs have been escalated to summer 2023 project start*



Tax Impact of 51 Main

Total Project Budget is \$12.01M. **\$1,000,000** from Free Cash will be used to offset cost of debt exclusion, saving taxpayers **\$1.0M** in principal and **\$420K** in interest payments over 20-year bond.

Impact for \$11.01M bond based on median assessed home value of \$660.5K is **\$81.59 in FY24**. This reduces to **\$76.93 in FY26** and **\$70.45 in FY29**. Will continue to drop in future years as existing debt is retired.

Proposition 2 ½ debt exclusion allows the Town to raise taxes to pay for the debt payment associated with an approved capital project. Debt exclusion requires 2/3 majority vote at Town Meeting **and** a majority ballot vote

WA was paid off in **FY20**; Miller, Crisafulli, and Stony Brook Schools will be paid off in **FY23**, Highway Garage in **FY24**

The Town's goal is to have between 7-10% of our operating budget in debt service. We are at 6.76% in FY23 and falling to 4.75% without any new debt authorized for FY24.

Town Treasurer has flexibility with bond issues to smooth out the tax rate changes



Excluded Debt History and Forecast

- In FY12 our Net Excluded Debt for the Town was \$3,968,758
- This amount has been steadily decreasing, falling to \$2,687,414 in FY23
- This is an opportune time to authorize additional excluded debt to avoid a significant “dip” in FY24

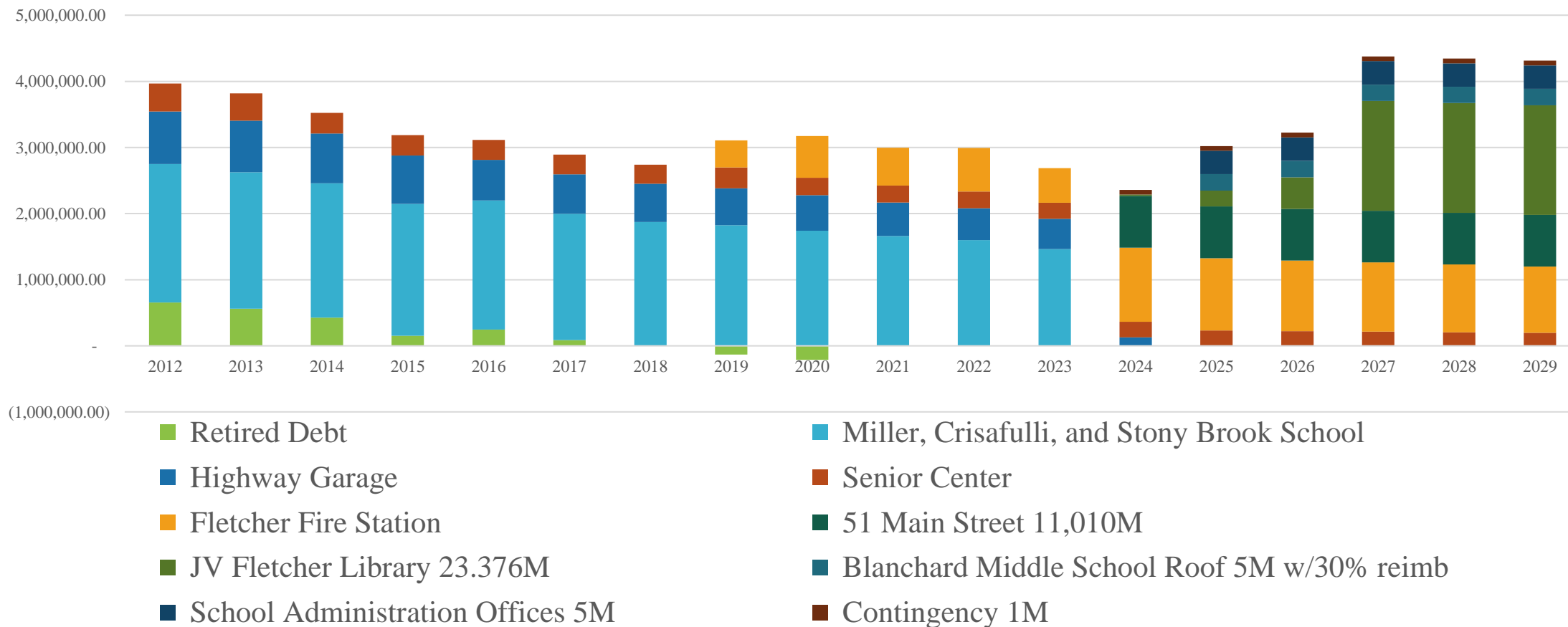
	FY12	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
Operating Budget	94,030,139.35	124,655,017.29	128,198,322.00	132,044,272.00	136,005,600.00	140,085,768.00	144,288,341.00	148,616,991.00	153,075,501.00
Excluded Debt	6,589,852.00	4,570,850.00	4,330,038.00	1,486,250.00	1,326,500.00	1,289,250.00	1,262,125.00	1,230,000.00	1,198,450.00
New Center Building at 51 Main Street 11.010M				781,710.00	781,710.00	781,710.00	781,710.00	781,710.00	781,710.00
JV Fletcher Library Expansion 23.376M				40,000.00	240,000.00	480,000.00	1,659,679.00	1,659,679.00	1,659,679.00
Blanchard Middle School Roof 5M w/ 30% reimb					355,000.00	355,000.00	355,000.00	355,000.00	355,000.00
School Administration Building Offices 5M					248,500.00	248,500.00	248,500.00	248,500.00	248,500.00
Contingency 1M				71,000.00	71,000.00	71,000.00	71,000.00	71,000.00	71,000.00
Subtotal	6,589,852.00	4,570,850.00	4,330,038.00	2,378,960.00	3,022,710.00	3,225,460.00	4,378,014.00	4,345,889.00	4,314,339.00
Excluded Debt % of Budget	7.01%	3.67%	3.38%	1.80%	2.22%	2.30%	3.03%	2.92%	2.82%
Offsets to Excluded Debt	(2,621,094.00)	(1,576,859.00)	(1,642,624.00)	(368.00)	-	-	-	-	-
Net Excluded Debt	3,968,758.00	2,993,991.00	2,687,414.00	2,378,592.00	3,022,710.00	3,225,460.00	4,378,014.00	4,345,889.00	4,314,339.00
Net Excluded Debt % of Budget	4.22%	2.40%	2.10%	1.80%	2.22%	2.30%	3.03%	2.92%	2.82%

*School Administration Offices are reflected in our forecast. This project is in preliminary planning stages now and the cost is estimated. It is possible that a debt exclusion may not be necessary.



Excluded Debt History and Forecast

FY12- FY29 Excluded Debt



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Excluded Debt Impact on Median Assessed Home of \$660,500

- The chart below represents the annual estimated tax impact of each project on the median assessed household of \$660,500
- The current projections show \$402.49 in excluded debt in FY27, which is similar to the amount of excluded debt on the average tax bill in FY16
- As our tax base grows at approximately 3% per year, excluded debt is spread over more taxpayers, reducing the household payment each year

Impact of Excluded Debt to \$660,500 Assessed House	FY12	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
Impact on Tax Rate (Existing Projects)	571.75	301.80	263.05	141.27	122.44	115.55	109.85	103.96	98.36
New Center Building, Demo, IT Relocation				81.59	79.23	76.93	74.71	72.54	70.45
JV Fletcher Library Expansion				4.17	24.32	47.24	158.61	154.02	149.57
Blanchard Middle School Roof				-	22.93	22.28	21.63	21.00	20.39
School Administration Building Offices				-	32.76	31.82	30.90	30.00	29.13
Contingency				7.41	7.20	6.99	6.79	6.59	6.40
Total Impact of Excluded Debt on Median Household	571.75	301.80	263.05	234.44	288.88	300.81	402.49	388.11	374.30

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Boards and Committees Support

The following have voted to support the project:

- ✓ Permanent Town Building Committee
- ✓ Select Board
- ✓ Finance Committee
- ✓ Capital Planning Committee
- ✓ Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee
- ✓ Westford Climate Action



Questions